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The Americans In Panama

Story of the Panama Canal From Start to Finish

By WILLIAM R. SCOTT

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CONTINUED FROM JULY 14.

Having cleaned up within, rigid in a diseased condition from other ports. Vaccination of every person who enters the canal zone is compulsory unless a good scar can be shown. In 1905 a shiplend of natives from

Martinique, imported to work on the canal, refused to land because they thought vaccination was a plan to brand them so they could never return to their home. They were forced out at the point of the bayonet and vaccinated.

It was before these plans had been matured that the first and only epidemic of yellow fever occurred in the canal zone. In April, 1905, an employee in the administration building in Panama became sick with the fever and from then on to September the canal zone was in the throes of a ear that was featured by the wholesale departure of employees. The newspapers gave the epidemic wide and oftentimes erroneous publicity, with the consequence that the government had to pay for the fear of the isthmus thus created in greatly increased salaries and gratuities to secure American employees.

By October, 1905, Colonel Gorgas had mastered the epidemic, and, although isolated cases have occurred since, yellow fever was permanently banished as the bugbear of Panama. From April to September, 1905, there were lenge from 1905 to 1911 inclusive: thirty-seven deaths among employees, mainly among Americans, with whom the epidemic started.

There was a slege with smallpox and the plague, but they, too, were eradicated in so far as epidemics are concerned, and malaria, pneumonia and tuberculosis remain as the most frequent attributed causes of death. Quinine has been bought by the ton for the canal zone dispensaries and hospitals. In 1908 each employee averaged about an ounce of quinine and was advised to take three grains daily.

The French had left hospital buildings in Colon and on the side of Ancon hill, just outside of Panama. The Americans renovated these and added to them until the present vast facilities came into form. They sometimes have more than 1,200 patients. A large asylum for the insane also is maintained. Hospital cars are attached to the passenger trains to bring in patients to the Ancon and Colon hospitals each day. In every town or settlement there is a dispensary with a physician in charge and a sanitary officer to inspect conditions of living. There are about twenty-four employees out of

every 1,000 constantly sick. For the canal zone, Panama and Colon, in 1905 the death rate was 49.94 per 1,000. In 1911 it was 21.46, or cut down more than one-half. In 1906 the death rate among the Americans from disease was 5.26, and in 1911 it was 2.82. In 1908 and 1910 there were more Americans killed in accidents or died from violence than died from disease.

It necessarily follows from an engineering task of this magnitude, where vast quantities of explosives are handled, where there is a considerable railroad mileage and other hazardous features of construction, that the death rate from accidents would be large.

Every month since the American occupation began in May, 1904, there has been an average of ten employees killed or have died from external causes. The total to July 1, 1912, was 905, and by the time the canal is completed. barring unusual catastrophes, the deaths from this cause will be around 1.100. Under the head of violence are included deaths by drowning, suicide. dynamite explosions, railroad accidents. poisonings, homicides, electric shocks, burns, lightning and accidental trau-

matism of various kinds. Dynamite Explosion In Culebra.

Scores of deaths have resulted from the practice of the native employees in using the railroad tracks as public highways. There have been bad collisions and wrecks with fatalities, and dynamite has claimed about one-tenth of the victims of external violence. In

Jan. 10, 1909, at Paraiso, two killed. ten injured. July 25, 1909, on Panama railroad

four killed, nine injured. Aug. 30, 1910, at Ancon quarry, four ing the favorable health showing on ment of employees, the government

July 19, 1911, at Ancon quarry, four ployees in one sense are picked men. | the expense. For the remaining days killed, two injured.

Forty deaths from dynamite explo- employed and usually in the prime of sions are noted for the year 1908, the life. Another thing that has kept the largest number for any one year of death rate down among the Americans canal construction, and this does not has been the practice of returning to take into account several individual the United States many patients who in 1908. fatalities. Chief Engineer Goethals is apparently had not long to live. Thus sued stringent regulations to govern their deaths were not a charge against the handling of the dynamite, but it the canal zone-

the handling of 25,250 tons of dynamite, or 50,517,650 pounds, to July 1 1912, the following principal accidents have occurred:

May 22. 1908, in Chagres division, two killed; premature explosion of twenty-six tons, caused by lightning. Oct. 8, 1908, at Empire, in the Culebra cut, five killed and eight injured, premature explosion. Oct. 10, 1908, at Mindi, seven killed

dredging in Atlantic entrance. Dec. 12, 1968, at Bas Obispo, premature explosion of twenty two tons in the Culebra cut, twenty-six killed and

and ten injured, premature explosion;

forty from: who knocked an iron pipe against a railroad track to dislodge some dynamite. They were angels in less than

been explained.

since the working force has been in quarantine regulations were made to excess of 20,000 men. When the numkeep out persons who might be brought | ber killed outside the line of duty is quainted with his newest recruits. subtracted from the total deaths by violence it will be found that the actual building of the canal has been attended by a normal percentage of such fatalities-certainly no larger than in any private construction of the same character or approximating the same magnitude. The largest number of deaths by violence among employees in one year was in 1909, when 178 were



Photo @ by American Press Association.

Colonel W. C. Gorgas.

1911. The following tab'e shows the

	Number of em- r			Vio-
Year.			disease.	lence.
1996	3,264	8.14	5.36	
1907	5.000	8.14	5.36	
1909	5,126	8.19	3.70	4.49
1909	5,300	5.56	3.23	2.33
1910	5,573	5.35	2.43	2.32
1911	6,163	5.14	2.82	2.33

Colonel Gorgas found in the early years of canal work that the Americans and Europeans were three times as healthy as the natives of the tropics. who as Chief Engineer Stevens noted in 1905, "are supposed to be immune from everything, but who as a matter of fact are subject to almost everything." This somewhat upsets the theory that northern races cannot live eadily in tropical climates.

Several of the annual reports of the sanitary department have noted the remarkably few diseases peculiar to men, such as alcoholism, etc.

REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

They must be in sound condition when

MAP OF THE ISTUMUS OF PANAMA.

the isthmus to the fact that the em- has sought results without regard to

anowance must be made in consider- | 000. Here, as in the pay and treat-

WORK OF BOY SCOUTS FOE OF THE

Plans Trip to Maui to Visit New Recruits

the scout movement. Incidentally, ing the disease, two seconds after the first blow. The James A. Wilder is well pleased with; The most recent troop recruited by worst accident, at Bas Obispo, has not the success that has attended Dr. Dr. McLaren is that at Hana, Maui, Most of the accidents have occurred missioner is contemplating a trip to siasm prevailing. Among those taking

Wilder and McLaren will make a tour Deas, E. J. Silva, Joseph Chalmers, W. of the other islands in behalf of the P. Haia, W. Wailohou, J. Olivera, H. ducing the rising generation to take Y. Lum, J. C. Loo, Cheong Lung, R. an active interest in the big world of A. Drummond, W. A. Anderson, J. C.

Dr. McLaren, who is at present a members.

It cannot be assumed that all the les and if intoxicants are not permitdeaths from disease in the canal zone ted to dominate the individual life were from causes that originated there will not be the slightest dillithere. The diseases peculiar to the culty in living near the equator. tropics have not claimed as many victims among the Americans as the diseases peculiar to the northern climates. But there has been a steady improvement, as may be noted in a fall in the death rate among the Americans from 8.14 per 1,000 in 1907 to 5.14 per 1,000 in 1911. /

An incident in the sanitary government of the isthmus was an executive order by President Taft, effective on Special Orders No. 130. Dec. 12, 1911, which prohibited the against. The president upon its possihealing in the canal zone being pointed out to him revoked the order on Jan. 1, 1912.

Employees are not permitted to remain in their homes and quarters July 1, 1904, to Nov. 1, 1905, forty- number of American employees, the when sick, but must go to the Colon four employees succumbed to firs dis- total death rate and the relation of or Ancon hospital unless the district ease. While the epidemic raged from deaths from disease to deaths by vio- physician expressly rules otherwise. The hospital grounds at Ancon are beautiful, and convalescent patients are sent to Taboga island, ten miles out in Panama bay, for final treatment. A dairy with 125 cows supplies fresh milk to the Ancon hospital.

At first Colonel Gorgas was not a member of the isthmian canal commission. But the extraordinary ability he displayed resulted in the separation of the sanitary department from the jurisdiction of the governor of the canal zone, and on Feb. 28, 1907, Colonel Gorgas was made a member of the commission, with the department of sanitation having equal dignity with other grand divisions of the work. He is the only official of the highest rank who has been with the canal project from its earliest days to the present.

The cost of the sanitary conquest of the isthmus to July 1, 1913, was the somewhat impressive total of \$16,200.

CHACRES RIVER

REPUBLIC

0F

of the canal the cost of sanitation will

be approximately \$2,500,000, or \$17 .-

500,000 in all by Jan. 1, 1914, which

amount is nearly \$3,000,000 less than

the cost estimated for the department

When the ordinary cleanliness to

which the American or the European

is accustomed in observed in the trop-

PANAMA

Scout Commissioner Wilder visitor in Honolulu, points out that the work of the Boy Scouts will go a long way toward eliminating the dreaded white plague from Hawaii, the work incumbent upon the youthful Dr. lan McLaren, who recently took troopers being laid along the lines of charge of the Alexander House Gym. improvement of the mental and physical man of a few years hence. He nasium of Wailuku, Maui, and imme-strongly advocates outdoor work and was in such common use that the em- diately became active in the estab plenty of it and is a firm believer in ployees naturally became careless. An lishment of troops of Boy Scouts the theory that tubercules can even instance is afforded by two employees | throughout the islands, is most en- tually be entirely eradicated from thusiastic over the manner in which these islands, provided scientific care the Maui boys have "taken hold" of and study is brought to bear in fight

McLaren's efforts and the Scout Com- where he reports the greatest enthuthe Valley Island during the next an active interest in the Hana troop week, for the purpose of becoming ac are: G. C. Cooper, chairman; John Chalmers, secrotary-treasurer; Fath-It is also probable that Messes, er Charles, scoutmaster; Dr. W. B. Boy Scout movement, establishing E. Polakiko, John Medeiros, troopers; troops as they journey along and in and M. Diverous, L. Y. Alona, Henry Cheong and C. O. Jacobs, associate

(To be Continued)

ORDERS OF THE HAWAIIAN DEPT.

 Corporal Spencer T. Stackhouse, practice of any system of therapeutics. 105th company, Coast Artillery Corps, or healing that the sanitary depart- Fort Ruger, H. T., is transferred as ment, the allopathic school, should rule private to Field Company E, Signal Corps, Fort Shafter, H. T. He will ble application to create a monopoly of proceed to Fort Shafter, H. T., reporting on arrival to the commanding officer of the organization to which transferred for duty.

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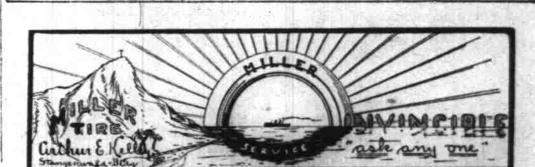
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